

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 15549

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SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS - FUTURE INDONESIAN POLICY

REF : JAKARTA 15467

1. AT DEC 1. CEREMONY SOME 200 CATEGORY B DETAINEES IN THE JAKARTA AREA WERE OFFICIALLY RELEASED FROM DETENTION AFTER TAKING AN OATH TO SUPPORT THE PANCASILA PHILOSOPHY AND ABIDE BY ALL LAWS AND REGULATIONS. THIS WAS TOKEN SAMPLING OF 2500 DETAINEES RELEASED NATIONWIDE. CEREMONY WAS CARRIED OUT WITH BRISK MILITARY PRECISION AT KODAM V HEADQUARTERS, WITH BRIEF SPEECH BY KODAM COMMANDER MG MANTIK EMPHASIZING THAT ALL INDONESIANS CONSTITUTE ONE BIG FAMILY AND THOSE WHO HAVE STRAYED MUST NOW RETURN TO THE BOSOM OF THE FAMILY AS LOYAL MEMBERS. CEREMONY WAS ATTENDED BY AMBASSADORS OF US, NETHERLANDS, JAPAN AND MALAYSIA; CHARGES OF UK AND PHILIPPINES; AND GERMAN DCM. IN ADDITION TO KOPKAMTIB CHIEF OF STAFF ADMIRAL SUDOMO, FONMIN ADAM MALIK AND SEVERAL SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS WERE PRESENT.

2. MAIN EVENT, HOWEVER, WAS ADMIRAL SUDOMO'S PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING CEREMONY. SUDOMO FIRST READ PREPARED STATEMENT ON FUTURE RELEASE POLICY WHICH CLOSELY FOLLOWED OUTLINE GIVEN IN REFTEL. HE SAID 2500 RELEASED TODAY CAME FROM
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SUMATRA (1430), JAVA (836), KALIMANTAN (83), SULAWESI (80),

AND MALUKU (44). HE THEN ANNOUNCED THAT 10,000 CATEGORY B DETAINEES WOULD BE RELEASED IN 1977, 10,000 IN 1978, AND THE REST IN 1979. CATEGORY A DETAINEES WOULD HOPEFULLY BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL BY THE END OF 1978. (ASKED LATER FOR EXACT NUMBERS, HE SAID THERE ARE NOW 1821 IN CATEGORY A AND 27,132 LEFT IN CATEGORY B FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF THE 2500. CATEGORY X - THOSE ARRESTED SINCE 1966 FOR EARLIER ASSOCIATIONS AND NOT YET ASSIGNED TO A PERMANENT CATEGORY - TOTALS 2401.)

3. SUDOMO THEN NOTED THAT DUE TO PROBLEM OF FINDING EMPLOYMENT FOR RELEASED DETAINEES IN ALREADY OVERCROWDED JOB MARKETS, GOVERNMENT WOULD ESTABLISH RESETTLEMENT CENTERS IN SUMATRA, KALIMANTAN, SULAWESI AND OTHER PLACES FOR THOSE WHO COME FROM THERE, WHILE DUE TO EXTREME POPULATION DENSITY ON JAVA THE JAVANESE RELEASES WOULD BE TRANSMIGRATED TO BURU AND OTHER ISLANDS. RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM WILL BE EXPENSIVE, HE STATED, AND THEREFORE IT MUST BE SPREAD OVER THREE YEARS. THOSE RELEASED MUST STILL BE WATCHED UNTIL THEY HAVE PROVED THEMSELVES TO BE GOOD CITIZENS, HE ADDED.

4. DURING ENSUING QUESTION PERIOD, REPORTERS SHOWED FAIR AMOUNT OF SKEPTICISM REGARDING FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF THOSE EVENTUALLY RELEASED TO RESETTLEMENT CENTERS. ASKED IF RELEASEES WOULD VOLUNTEER FOR RESETTLEMENT, SUDOMO REPLIED THAT THEY WERE NEEDED TO ASSIST IN TRANSMIGRATION PROGRAM AND WOULD BE FREE TO VISIT OTHER AREAS AS LONG AS THEIR PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS WAS THE RESETTLEMENT CENTER. WHEN ASKED IF THESE PLANS WERE A RESULT OF FOREIGN PRESSURE, SUDOMO SAID INDONESIA HAD EVOLVED ITS OWN SOLUTION TO WHAT IS AN INTERNAL MATTER AND HAD NOT REACTED TO FOREIGN PRESSURE. HE STATED THAT THE 2500 RELEASED TODAY WOULD GO TO THEIR FORMER HOMES RATHER THAN TO RESETTLEMENT CENTERS, BUT THOSE WHO COULD NOT FIND JOBS COULD VOLUNTEER FOR RESETTLEMENT. IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY ABOUT WHEN REPORTERS COULD VISIT BURU ISLAND, THE ADMIRAL SAID POSSIBLY NEXT YEAR, ADDING WITH A CHUCKLE THAT OF COURSE NEXT YEAR (1977) BEGINS NEXT MONTH.

5. AFTER PRESS CONFERENCE AMBASSADOR ASKED SUDOMO WHEN THE PEOPLE NOW ON BURU WOULD BE FREE TO COME AND GO. SUDOMO SAID CONFIDENTIAL

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THEY WERE BEING RELEASED INDIVIDUALLY AS IT IS DETERMINED THAT THEY ARE NO LONGER SECURITY RISKS, AND IT WOULD TAKE SOME TIME BEFORE ALL HAD BEEN FREED.

6. COMMENT: GOI OBVIOUSLY INTENDS THAT TODAY'S CEREMONY SIGNAL, FOR FOREIGN PRESS AND CRITICS, BEGINNING OF END OF DETAINEE PROBLEM. UNFORTUNATELY, MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS HANDLED LEAVES MANY QUESTIONS STILL UNANSWERED. DETAINEES

WERE MARCHED INTO HALL, PUT THROUGH CEREMONY, MARCHED OUT AGAIN AND RE-ASSEMBLED IN ARMY TRUCKS. NO OPPORTUNITY WAS GIVEN TO REPORTERS TO TALK WITH DETAINEES. QUESTION FROM CORRESPONDENT OF FAR EAST ECONOMIC REVIEW FINALLY ELICITED STATEMENT FROM ADMIRAL SUDOMO THAT DETAINEES THEY HAD SEEN WERE GOING HOME TO BE REUNITED WITH FAMILIES; THOSE THAT DID NOT HAVE FAMILIES WOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO GO TO TRANSMIGRATION CENTERS. SUDOMO'S EMPHASIS WAS ON NEED TO FIND EMPLOYMENT FOR DETAINEES.

7. AMBASSADOR ASKED SUDOMO WHETHER REPORTERS WOULD BE PERMITTED ULTIMATELY TO TALK WITH DETAINEES. HE REPLIED, "PERHAPS IN THREE MONTHS TIME, AFTER THEY HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO FREEDOM." SKEPTICISM WILL REMAIN UNTIL SUCH TIME AS FOREIGN REPORTERS, AT LEAST, HAVE OPPORTUNITY TALK WITH THOSE RELEASED.

8. SECOND MAJOR QUESTION HANGS ON WHAT GOI MEANS BY RESETTLEMENT IN TRANSMIGRATION CENTERS. SKEPTICS WONDER WHETHER THIS IS JUST ANOTHER FORM OF PERMANENT RESTRICTION. SUDOMO WAS NOT CLEAR ON WHETHER THOSE WHO ARE REGISTERED IN TRANSMIGRATION CENTERS WILL BE PERMITTED TO RETURN TO JAVA TO WORK IF THEY CAN FIND JOBS OR WILL BE PERMITTED ONLY TO MAKE TEMPORARY VISITS.
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